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SUBJECT: START FOLLOW-ON: A/S GOTTEMOELLER PRESENTS U.S.  
POSITIONS, HEARS INITIAL GOR REACTIONS

REF: A. STATE 61832  
1B. MOSCOW 1544  
1C. STATE 60487  
1D. STATE 60343

Classified By: DCM Eric S. Rubin. Reasons 1.4(b/d).

11. (C) Summary: Assistant Secretary Rose Gottemoeller led an inter-agency delegation that presented U.S. papers on SNDVs and ODSNWS, a draft Joint Understanding (Refs C and D), and the U.S. non-paper containing comments on the Russian "vision" paper to a Russian interagency delegation June 15-16. Antonov reiterated that the June 15-16 meetings in Moscow were not intended to negotiate text, but to give the U.S. the opportunity to brief on new proposals in preparation for the June 22-24 formal negotiations in Geneva, and to enable the Russian side to understand U.S. positions. The first day (two hours), the U.S. side briefed on the first two papers, with the Russian side asking questions about SNDV and ODSNW limits, heavy bomber weapon storage areas, counting rules, and data exchange provisions. Antonov downplayed the need for a substantive presidential START follow-on statement at the July 6-8 Summit. NSC Senior Director Look countered that the interagency had just held several important meetings in Washington and that, while it was recognized that not all issues would be settled by the Summit, it was essential to agree on a text to present to the Presidents. A simple progress report would be viewed as a failure. On June 16, the U.S. delegation continued to clarify concepts contained in the U.S. non-papers and went through the U.S. response to the Russian vision paper. Antonov noted that with each meeting the position of the two sides had become clearer and thus there was some basis upon which to think about a joint document for the Presidents that reflected "converging positions" of the two sides. Antonov undertook to reconsider the idea of a simple report to the Presidents, in response to Look's comment of the day before. Saying he would not be bringing a new position to the following week's talks in Geneva, Antonov commented that "it was hard to obtain interagency agreement on the Russian position but harder to change it." End Summary.

June 15

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U.S. Presentation on SNDVs and ODSNWS  
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12. (C) A/S Rose Gottemoeller opened June 15 talks in Moscow by formally presenting a U.S. position paper (Ref D) on Strategic Nuclear Delivery Vehicles (SNDVs) and Operationally Deployed Strategic Nuclear Warheads (ODSNWS), which had been delivered to the MFA June 12 (Ref B). A/S Gottemoeller

commented on the helpful symmetry developing in the two sides' approach to START follow-on work. Some differences remain to be worked out, and not all differences would be resolved by the time of the July Moscow summit. Nonetheless, the U.S. hoped that there would be substantial progress to report to the Presidents, which they could endorse and use to launch the effort to reach a follow-on agreement by the end of the year.

¶3. (C) Delegation member Ted Warner explained that the U.S. Government was presently reviewing the issue of arming ICBMs and SLBMs with conventional warheads and it was not clear how that review would turn out. Referring to the non-paper on SNDV and ODSNW, Warner and Mike Elliott enumerated conditions under which warheads and SNDVs would be counted against the respective limits - and conditions under which they would not, noting in particular that operational systems undergoing extensive maintenance periods and new systems designed to be conventional only necessitated a more flexible approach to counting ODSNW and SNDVs. For example, when warheads are removed from submarines during extended refueling overhaul, the warheads should no longer be counted against the ODSNW limit. When the warheads are reinstalled following the overhaul period, these warheads should again be counted against the ODSNW limit.

#### Initial Russian Reactions

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¶4. (C) Noting that both papers had arrived late June 12 (Russian national day), Antonov said he had called his people back into work, and emphasized that he saw the meetings June

15-16 as giving the U.S. an opportunity to provide more information on its proposals. Deputy Head of the Russian delegation General Yevgeniy Buzhinskiy opened discussion by asking whether the corresponding limit for each category is intended to be independent from the other, or whether there is a logic in linking the limits on numbers of SNDV and warheads. A/S Gottemoeller responded that the two levels were related but independent of each other, emphasizing that there were no sublimits for ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers, as there had been under START, and thus giving each side the freedom to distribute warheads among various delivery systems. In this light, it might be expected that the Russian Federation could have - and more importantly would be allowed to have - a greater number of warheads on ICBMs, while the U.S. might place more warheads on SLBMs. Warner amplified that, under START, there exists a close linkage between types of SNDVs and warheads; agreed attribution figures are associated with ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers. The new U.S. approach removes those attribution rules. The number of ODSNW under the new proposal for each side would be determined by the actual numbers on delivery vehicles. Each side would be required to provide greater transparency in reporting and facilitating verification to confirm the number of warheads actually deployed under the terms of the new agreement.

¶5. (C) In some cases, but not all, delivery vehicles would count against the SNDV limit. For example, during extended refueling overhaul periods, submarines have neither warheads nor missiles onboard; therefore, they would not count against the limit of ODSNW. However, when work is completed and ODSNW are reloaded, they would again count against the limit. To promote transparency, the U.S. was prepared to work out with Russia transparency measures for verification during the refueling overhaul period. Buzhinskiy summarized his understanding of the explanations as: each party would be able to structure its strategic forces, within the numerical limits, to suit its own strategic preferences. Warner clarified that the U.S. proposed to identify, with respect to heavy bombers, the number of ODSNWS stored in weapons storage areas that support the heavy bomber air bases. The number of warheads and their location was connected with the ability of the bomber to serve as a delivery vehicle for those weapons. In this regard, Antonov reminded the U.S. delegation that Russia was still waiting for a reply to questions posed by

General Venetsev at previous sessions. (Note: Response was received, Ref A, and delivered June 16. End Note.)

Testing of Old and New Delivery Systems

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¶ 16. (C) MFA Ambassador Streltsov sought further clarification concerning U.S. proposals about testing of current and future missiles with either conventional or nuclear warheads. Was it the U.S. position that a side could test an ICBM or SLBM with any type of warhead? Would the number of warheads be agreed? Would both sides be required to conduct elaborate verification means concerning the number of warheads each delivery vehicle was capable of carrying, as well as data exchanges pertaining to launchers and missiles, and the number of warheads on each, as is now the case under START? A/S Gottemoeller responded that such verification procedures could be required. However, as to data exchanges, the U.S. had not yet defined how those would be undertaken, but was certain that they would likely differ from those being conducted under START. Warner added that the logic of Ambassador Streltsov's question was sound, i.e., if one side claimed that a certain number of warheads were on a missile, it would be necessary to be able to verify that fact.

¶ 17. (C) A/S Gottemoeller said she had taken note of Russian concerns about telemetry. Clarity and transparency in the testing process would be necessary so both sides could see how new types of delivery vehicles were being developed, as well as checking current systems. A principal goal of the treaty would be providing predictability for both sides regarding the future development of the other side's nuclear forces. The attractiveness of the new U.S. "hybrid" approach to counting delivery vehicles and warheads was that it combined the predictability of START with the flexibility of the Moscow Treaty.

¶ 18. (C) The Russian delegation returned to the matter of Verification of conventionally-armed long-range missiles (ICBMs and SLBMs). Streltsov asked what procedures the U.S.

side envisioned to enable each side to determine whether new missiles in flight testing were intended to carry a nuclear or conventional warhead. Warner agreed with the Russian side that this would be very difficult to determine. Streltsov also asked how the U.S. side would mitigate the dangers associated with the launch of a conventionally-armed ICBM or SLBM that might overfly or closely approach Russia in its flight to its non-Russian target. A/S Gottemoeller stated that the uncertainties associated with the use of conventionally-armed long-range missiles could be addressed through different types of verification and transparency measures. For example, pre-launch notifications might be used in circumstances where a conventionally-armed missile was launched against a non-Russian target. And in circumstances where one was verifying the presence of a conventional warhead on an ICBM or SLBM in its launcher, on-site inspections using radiation detection equipment might be used. The utility of such measures would depend on the goal being sought, and the question would require a great deal of further discussion.

Joint Understanding: Key for Summit

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¶ 19. (C) Turning to the draft Joint Understanding (Ref C), A/S Gottemoeller noted that the U.S. had taken some of the concepts from the Russian vision paper while stressing that the specific numerical limits were a significant addition to the initial discussion of this issue. Antonov responded that the U.S. concept was becoming clearer and clearer but that it was going to take a lot of time to consider it thoroughly, including into the autumn. Buzhinskiy asked whether there would be any real reductions under the U.S. concept or whether ODSNW would just be taken to storage areas and delivery vehicles removed from deployment rather than be destroyed. A/S Gottemoeller stressed that the START follow-on treaty should be seen as a "bridge agreement"

leading to further negotiations focused on affecting deep reductions.

¶10. (C) Summing up the proposals for a joint declaration by Presidents Obama and Medvedev at the July summit in Moscow, A/S Gottemoeller said that the U.S. had endeavored to combine the Russian vision document and the aforementioned U.S. proposals. The declaration accepted the timeframe during which U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals would be reduced to the new limits (7 years), and the duration of the new agreement (10 years). The U.S. proposal for limitations on ODSNW's (1500-1600) and SNDVs (1100) was a significant addition to the Geneva discussions. Given the complexity of the issues, the U.S. recognized that not all issues could be resolved by the time of the July summit. Nonetheless, it is important that the presidents agreed to a concrete, detailed framework for the START follow-on treaty that will guide the work of both sides through the end of the year. The U.S. sees the joint understanding as an important summit deliverable.

Russian Reaction: Maybe by Summit Time

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¶11. (C) Antonov thanked the U.S. side for the presentations, noting that U.S. positions are much clearer as a result. Still, he argued that the nuances and implications required careful study through the summer before returning to work on details of the new agreements in the autumn. Buzhinskiy argued that, in effect, the U.S. proposals would not result in the destruction of any ODSNWS or SNDVs, i.e., that current levels could be maintained. In response, A/S Gottemoeller underscored that, from the U.S. perspective, although eliminations under the START follow-on treaty may be modest, it would serve as a "bridge" between START and the Moscow Treaty on one side and future agreements to reduce ODSNW. As President Obama noted in his April speech in Prague, deeper reductions in arsenals would come later. Still, for U.S. strategic posture what is being proposed will result in reductions. The new proposals (1500-1600 warheads) will take the U.S. below the lower limit (1700) of the Moscow Treaty, and will also require the U.S. to reduce SNDVs below START numbers. Buzhinskiy contended, nonetheless, that the agreement would not result in deep reductions or mandate actual destruction of launchers or warheads. A/S Gottemoeller again observed that future negotiations would tackle those issues.

¶12. (C) Warner noted that neither under START nor in the Moscow Treaty was Russia and the U.S. obliged to destroy warheads. In the on-going U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, no decisions had been made about the appropriate levels of warheads for the U.S. It remained to be seen whether delivery vehicles will actually be eliminated.

¶13. (C) In response to Antonov's comments downplaying the need for a substantive presidential START follow-on statement at the July 6-8 Summit, NSC Senior Director Look countered that the interagency had just held several important meetings in Washington and that, while it was recognized that not all issues would be settled by the Summit, it was essential to agree on a text to present to the Presidents. A simple progress report would be viewed as a failure. Therefore, a good faith effort was required to agree on core elements to establish a framework that would result in agreement by December 2009. Antonov responded that the real negotiations would begin on June 22 and that he was devoting all of his efforts to the START Follow-on treaty negotiations.

June 16

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Answers to Russian Questions

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¶14. (C) The U.S. delegation continued to clarify concepts contained in U.S. non-papers provided the previous day, including "nuclear armaments for heavy bombers located in

specified weapon storage areas" and a description of reductions in U.S. SNDVs that could result if simplified elimination procedures or exemptions were agreed for delivery vehicles that are no longer capable of delivering nuclear weapons. A/S Gottemoeller described the concept of "phantom" warheads, noting these were warheads still attributed under START to SNDVs that are no longer capable of delivering such warheads. The U.S. proposed two ways of addressing this issue: Eliminate the launchers associated with such warheads through agreed, simplified provisions; or, exempt them from the new treaty through an agreed exemption, which could include additional transparency measures. In response to Koshelev's question at the BIC meeting in Geneva the previous week regarding ODSNW "floating" in and out of treaty accountability, Gottemoeller said theQssue needed further discussion between the two sides, as there were some Russian warheads that also could "float."

¶15. (C) Streltsov posed more questions: whether there would be a category of "non-deployed" SNDVs that would become accountable at some stage and subject to some verification measures (such as notifications) prior to becoming "deployed," and whether the U.S. was able to address the issue of "nuclear ambiguity" with respect to the launch of conventionally-armed ICBMs and SLBMs. Concerning the latter question, the U.S. delegation's identification of transparency measures, notifications, and the changed strategic relationship between Russia and the United States did not appear to be persuasive, with Streltsov asserting that this issue had to be seen in a broader context, i.e., with respect to obligations under Article VI of the NPT, while also noting that assessments were based on capabilities rather than on intentions. He stressed that the issue of "nuclear ambiguity" had much broader implications than the bilateral treaty.

¶16. (C) Buzhinskiy followed up by making a "purely military comment" that in 1995 when U.S.-Russian relations were even better than today, then-President Yeltsin had been "ready to push the button," when the Norwegians test-fired their sounding rocket. That was when the idea for the Joint Data Exchange Center (JDEC) was developed. While the U.S. arguments for conventionally-armed ICBMs and SLBMs were based on targeting terrorists and rogue states, the United States needed to understand that these targets were located along the periphery of Russia and therefore any conventionally-armed ballistic missile launch would be heading in the direction of Russia, which was the root cause of Russia's concern, Buzhinskiy said.

¶17. (C) Buzhinskiy also asked how the United States came up with the limit of 1100 for SNDVs in the draft Joint Understanding, noting that according to the U.S. concept of exempting certain delivery vehicles from the new treaty as described by Warner earlier that morning, the number could be

reduced to 922 (starting from a baseline of the current declared 1196, minus 96 launch tubes from the Ohio-class submarines that have been converted, minus 66 B1 bombers which will have been converted, minus 12 B52's, equaled 922).

He also pressed on whether the U.S. would have to actually eliminate any SNDVs in order to reach this number. He stressed that Russia would not accept "just counting them out."

JDEC

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¶18. (C) In response to Warner's comment about the possibility of using JDEC to address the question of nuclear ambiguity, Buzhinskiy asked whether the U.S. envisioned using JDEC to do pre-notifications of U.S. launches, which was different from the original purpose for JDEC. Warner said JDEC could be a potential forum for such pre-notifications if both sides agreed, but stressed that the U.S. was not proposing a new use for JDEC.

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¶19. (C) Gottemoeller presented the U.S. non-paper containing comments on the Russian "vision" paper. Antonov noted that with each meeting, the position of the two sides has become clearer and thus there was some basis upon which to think about a joint document for the Presidents that reflected "converging positions" of the two sides. He assured Gottemoeller that the Russian side would study and review the U.S. papers and be prepared to work on them for the upcoming session in Geneva. Gottemoeller responded that the U.S. proposed draft Joint Understanding already focused on points of convergence, and asked whether the Russian side would be prepared to take the U.S. paper and add some more points of convergence either before or during the next session. Antonov demurred on providing anything prior to the upcoming meeting in Geneva, but confirmed that he had understood the U.S. comments that a simple report to the Presidents, as he had described it earlier, would be seen as a failure in Washington. In that light, he stated that he would look again at the Russian idea for the report to the Presidents and see what can be taken from the U.S. non-paper and try to formulate some proposals. He confirmed that "we want our Presidents to be satisfied with our work" but also noted that what was important was that after the Summit we should be able to continue our work on a draft treaty. Gottemoeller emphasized the need to reach a consensus on the summit document by June 24 and, if not, then to consider more meetings, perhaps in Washington.

No New Russian Positions in Geneva

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¶20. (C) Antonov said there would be no surprises from Russia at the Geneva meetings; he would arrive with unchanged positions on the major elements of the Russian proposal, and explained that "it was very difficult to obtain interagency agreement on the Russian position, but even more difficult to change it." He stressed that the Russian side was prepared to work as long as necessary to reach a consensus. He added that there were difficulties with the Russian delegation traveling to Washington, and suggested the two sides could agree in Geneva on possible future meetings. Gottemoeller agreed.

¶21. (C) Comment: Although there was little substance agreed during the meeting, Antonov was back to a workmanlike attitude, focusing on what could be accomplished, and acknowledging areas of convergence between the two sides. He made clear that Russia would be prepared to address many of the substantive issues during the Geneva talks. Antonov did not raise the subject of missile defense and links to the START Follow-on treaty during the two days of talks, but during the lunch after the meeting, asked Gottemoeller if it was true the U.S. would not have an answer on the "third site" before the Summit.

BEYRLE